

VZCZCXYZ0010
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHJM #3178 2071237
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 261237Z JUL 06
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3731
INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 003178

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; OPS PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY;
OPS PLEASE PASS TO USAID FOR KUNDER/MCLOUD/BORODIN; PRM
FOR PDAS GREENE AND PRM/ANE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PREL PGOV KWBG KPAL IS
SUBJECT: MGGZ01 - JERUSALEM JULY 26 SITREP

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) Heavy fighting between IDF forces and Palestinian factions in Gaza is ongoing, with reports of at least 14 Palestinian fatalities. At least nine Qassam rockets were launched into Israel, as of 1500 local July 26. Local media gave prominent coverage to Secretary Rice's meeting with PA President Abbas. The Rafah and Karni/al-Mintar crossings are closed July 26, while the Nahal Oz fuel transfer station is operational. All ten electricity lines from Israel into Gaza are operational July 26. End summary.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

¶2. (SBU) A senior American officer assigned to the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) headquarters in Jerusalem reported that both American citizens assigned to UNTSO are accounted for after the bombing of the UNTSO position at al-Khayam in southern Lebanon, July 25.

¶3. (SBU) At least 13 Palestinians have been killed, including three PIJ activists, a Hamas military wing member, and a 7-year old child, during a still ongoing IDF incursion, as of 1500 local July 26, into the Shijaya neighborhood of Gaza City, a heavily crowded Hamas stronghold. Israeli forces, with at least 20 APCs, are engaged there in heavy fighting. At least 42 Palestinians have been injured, 11 critically. In the Khan Younis governorate, a 14-year old was killed in Abbasan village. There were IDF air strikes against houses in Rafah and Gaza City, both of which were allegedly used to store weapons for the Hamas military wing; no casualties or injuries.

¶4. (SBU) IDF arrest operations continued in the West Bank. A senior al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade member Ibrahim al-Hindi was arrested in Ramallah. During the military operation in Ramallah, the IDF raided the military intelligence headquarters and the office of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation. At least three were lightly wounded by IDF gunfire.

¶5. (SBU) At least nine Qassam rockets were fired July 26, as of 1500 local. Three were fired towards Ashkelon and the western Negev, and six just north of the Erez crossing. No injuries or damage were reported by the Israeli media. The Iz al-Din Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, claimed responsibility for three of the rockets fired north of Erez. The PFLP military wing claimed responsibility for

one of the three rockets fired July 25.

¶6. (SBU) PA security forces scuffled July 25 with nearly 700 Palestinian protesters, carrying flags of militant groups such as Hamas, PIJ, Hizballah, who tried to approach the Presidential compound, Muqata, in Ramallah, while Secretary Rice met with President Abbas. The PA security forces stopped the protesters one kilometer from the compound.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

¶7. (SBU) The Rafah passenger crossing is closed July 25. The Karni/al-Mintar crossing is closed on July 26, according to USAID Gaza-based staff. It was open July 25 and 213 truckloads entered Gaza. The Nahal Oz fuel transfer station is operational on July 26.

¶8. (SBU) All ten electricity feeder lines from Israel into Gaza are operational July 26. Municipal employees in Rafah and Gaza City began striking July 26 due to non-payment of salaries in four months, so solid waste is piling up.

WALLES